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ABSTRACT

This book examines issues of national and cultural identity in a multicultural society. It focuses on the educational aims of societies that are committed to liberal democratic principles, societies that support members of different cultural groups so that these groups may flourish. It examines the philosophical concerns raised by multicultural education, and the fears engendered by a commitment on the part of the public schools to maintaining subcultural identity. The book uses the phrase "common school" to indicate that one of the historical purposes of American education is to develop a common loyalty and uses the phrase "uncommon identity" to mark the present moment in public education and the notion that all identities are unique. It emphasizes that public schools must maintain a commitment to liberal democratic values, and it challenges the view that this obligation is incompatible with cultural valuation. The text is divided into nine chapters: "Education: Cultural Difference and National Identity," "Nature of National Identity and Citizenship Education," "Cultural Difference," "The Possibility of Moral Education in a Liberal Society," "Aims of Multicultural Education," "Uncommon Identities: Hard Cases," "On Robust Recognition and Storytelling," "Citizenship Education and the Multicultural Ideal," and "Common Schools and the Public Formation." (RJM)

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